

Johannesburg, South Africa - Today U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) joined with other members of Congress, youth representatives, non-governmental organizations, and businesses to call on the United States government to take a leadership role in promoting renewable energy and climate change mitigation.

Congressmen Blumenauer, Christopher Shays, and George Miller, all participating in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), urged the United States negotiators to support a Type I initiative calling for 10 percent of the global primary energy supply to be derived from new renewable energy sources by 2012. This goal could be accomplished through increasing the export credit financing for renewable energy projects worldwide, as well as industrialized nations like the United States leading by example and investing in renewable energy sources.

While this is an important multilateral initiative, it should not be a substitute for setting meaningful targets for renewable energy for industrialized countries in the World Summit Plan of Implementation. Currently, negotiators are considering a provision in this documents that would set goals for the deployment of renewable energy. Unfortunately, the United States Administration has opposed the adoption of any specific targets for renewable energy.

"It is important to set specific targets in international agreements in order to leverage domestic environmental policies. As the world's richest nation and the largest polluter, the United States has a special opportunity, obligation, and responsibility to be a better partner in helping the rest of the world meet environmental goals," said Representative Blumenauer.

According to the United Nations, about 2.5 billion people lack access to modern energy services. Many people in developing countries are forced to rely upon biomass energy, such as the burning of wood, that causes deforestation and biodiversity loss. The developed world continues to have the highest per capita use of fossil fuels, and carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels accounts for 75 percent of human produced greenhouse gas emissions. With less than 5% of the world's population, the United States emits 25 percent of the world's greenhouse gases.

"The fact that every U.S. citizen emits 10 times as much carbon dioxide as each person in a developing country suggests that we should take the lead in significant action," stated Blumenauer.

Congressman Blumenauer is a member of the United States delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is working to engage in meaningful partnerships and dialogues with parliamentarians from other countries as well as to encourage the United States to take an active role in negotiating strong environmental commitments at the Summit.

For more information on the World Summit on Sustainable Development, please visit the following website: [www.johannesburgsummit.org](http://www.johannesburgsummit.org)

For more information on Congressman Earl Blumenauer's work in Portland, Oregon and in the U.S. Congress, please visit the following website: [www.house.gov/blumenauer](http://www.house.gov/blumenauer)